

A LETTER FROM SENATOR LINCOLN CHAFEE

Does Your Family Know What To Do In the Event of an Emergency?

We have all been deeply saddened by the events and loss of life that have occurred as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Our heartfelt sympathies go out to the victims and their families.

With the proximity of Rhode Island to the ocean, this disaster has caused us all to question our own preparations for an emergency – either natural or man made.

As a Member of the Senate Homeland Security Committee, I wanted to share with you some common-sense ideas on how you can prepare yourself and your family for an emergency.

On the back of this postcard are nine steps that all families should take to better prepare for emergencies. Please take a few minutes to review the suggestions and post them in your home for future reference.



If you would like additional information, you can access the following websites that contain many constructive ideas:

The Department of Homeland Security:

www.dhs.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY

The American Red Cross in Rhode Island:

www.redcross.org or call 1-800-842-1122

Please let me know if I can provide any additional assistance.

My Best,

Lincoln Chafee

In Case of an Emergency – Be Prepared!

- Pick a place to meet after a disaster. Designate two meeting places. Choose one right outside your home, in case of a sudden household emergency, such as a fire. The second place you choose needs to be outside your neighborhood, in the event that it is not safe to stay near or return to your home.
- Choose an emergency contact person outside your area because it may be easier to call long distance than locally after a local/regional disaster. Take a minute now to call or e-mail an out-of-town friend or family member to ask him or her to be your family's designated contact in the event of an emergency. Be sure to share the contact's phone number with everyone in the family. During an emergency, you can call your contact who can share with other family members where you are; how you are doing; and how to get in contact with you.
- Teach your children how and when to call 9-1-1 or your local Emergency Medical Services number for help. Post these and other emergency telephone numbers by telephones.
- Check your child's school Web site or call the school office to request a copy of the school's emergency plan. Keep a copy at home and work or other places where you spend a lot of your time and make sure the school's plan is incorporated into your family's emergency plan. Also, learn about the disaster plans at your workplace or other places where you and your family spend time.
- Find out in advance how to care for your pets and working animals when disaster strikes. Pets should not be left behind, but could be taken to a veterinary office, family member's home or animal shelter during an emergency. Also be sure to store extra food and water for pets. For more information, contact the Humane Society Web site at www.hsus.org or call 1-800-HUMANE-1.
- Practice. Conduct fire drills and practice evacuating your home twice a year. Drive your planned evacuation route and plot alternate routes on a map in case main roads are blocked or gridlocked. Practice drills at home, school and work. Commit a weekend to update telephone numbers, emergency supplies and review your plan with everyone.
- Build an emergency supply kit to take with you in an evacuation. You should keep enough supplies in your home to meet the needs of you and your family for at least three days. The basics to stock in your portable kit include: water, food, battery-powered radio and flashlight with extra batteries, first aid supplies, change of clothing, blanket or sleeping bag, wrench or pliers, whistle, dust mask, plastic sheeting and duct tape, trash bags, map, a manual can opener for canned food and special items for infants, elderly, the sick or people with disabilities. Keep these items in an easy to carry container such as a covered trash container, a large backpack, or a duffle bag.
- Take a minute to check your family's first aid kit, and note any depleted items — then, add them to your shopping list. Don't have a first aid kit? Add that to the list or build a kit yourself. Consider creating a kit for each vehicle as well. For more information about first aid kits, contact the Red Cross in Rhode Island at www.redcross.org or call 1-800-842-1122.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person. Store a minimum of one gallon of water per person per day (two quarts for drinking, two quarts for food preparation and sanitation). Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and strenuous activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and people who are sick will also need more.